

Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: October 20, 2008

From :  Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Hon. ASLA, Executive Director

Subject: **Agenda Item 13: Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 84 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for water conservation and interpretive elements associated with the planned soccer field installation at the Los Angeles River Center and Gardens, City of Los Angeles.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 84 funds in the amount of \$54,000 to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for water conservation and interpretive elements associated with the planned soccer field installation at the Los Angeles River Center and Gardens, City of Los Angeles.

Legislative Authority: Sections 33204.2(a), 33204.27(a) and 75050(g)(2) of the Public Resources Code.

Background: The Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006 (Proposition 84), allocated funds to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy in Chapter 5, 75050(g)(2) of the Public Resources Code, for the protection and restoration of rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water and other natural resources and the implementation of watershed protection activities throughout the watershed of the Upper Los Angeles River pursuant to Section 79508 of the Water Code. As outlined in the MRCA's application, staff finds the proposed project consistent with Proposition 84's policy to promote the access to and enjoyment of land and water resources.

The Los Angeles River Center and Gardens (River Center) includes a concrete tennis court. Several years ago, the net and posts were removed and the court has since been leased to the Anahuak Youth Soccer Association. This youth league utilizes the court for elementary-school age children, who do not require a full-size regulation field. NIKE, Inc. and the LA84 Foundation approached MRCA and Anahuak with a proposal to install state-of-the-art artificial turf through NIKE's "Let Me Play" program. The existing concrete tennis court will be used as a base for the new field. The soccer field is also referred to as a "futsal court" since it is not full regulation size.

The installation of the artificial turf presents an opportunity to increase the River Center's sustainability and create a multi-benefit project. The subject grant would fund the installation

of water conservation elements at the field along with the new play surfacing. An underground cistern would capture and collect all rainfall that falls onto the court. The collected water would then be used for irrigation of the adjacent planted space. An interpretive element would also be added in the form of an educational panel that will contain information about water supply and water quality issues. The panel will be in close proximity to the futsal court and its users.

Recent news reports have raised concerns about the safety of synthetic turf, particularly related to its lead content. Lead is present in the pigments of some synthetic turf products to give the turf its various colors. In July 2008, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) released an evaluation of various synthetic athletic fields. The evaluation concluded that young children are not at risk from exposure to lead in these fields. The CPSC evaluation showed that newer fields had no lead or generally had the lowest lead levels. Although small amounts of lead were detected on the surface of some older fields, none of these tested fields released amounts of lead that would be harmful to children. As an overall guideline, CPSC recommends young children wash their hands after playing outside, especially before eating.

Consideration: The grant to the MRCA would be in the amount of \$54,000. The funds would be used for design and construction of the cistern and interpretive panel and associated staff costs to oversee the project and manage the contractors.